

PERSPECTIVE
12 Dec 1972

McGarvey, Patrick J.
C.I.A.: The Myth and the Madness
New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 240 pp.,
\$6.95, LC 72-82770
Publication Date: October 25, 1972

It is one of the delightful ironies of American life that there is now a sizable literature on the U.S. intelligence community and particularly on the Central Intelligence Agency. This latest contribution by Patrick McGarvey is more revealing than many other books in the literature, probably because the author is a former intelligence officer who served both in the CIA and in the Defense Intelligence Agency of the Department of Defense. It is a difficult book to review because on the one hand it offers much interesting and valuable material (never, to this reviewer's knowledge, previously printed), while on the other it is marred by serious flaws which damage its overall value.

McGarvey is a believer in the need for U.S. intelligence and of a CIA in particular. His main purpose in writing his book is to shed some light on what he terms a damaging myth that CIA is efficient, well run, and capable of almost any act of trickery and intrigue. He attempts, through a broad examination of what intelligence is all about, to portray CIA as really a bureaucratic mess with little or no central direction, and in sore need of drastic change. He attempts this through pulling together his own personal experiences in intelligence. He stresses that the U.S. intelligence scene is in bad state and that no one in government seems willing or able to effect necessary changes.

The author approaches his subject in two ways. He points out that an appreciation of intelligence and its effectiveness is not gained solely by a study of the organizational structure of the intelligence community, since this reveals little of the conflicts and contradictions which plague intelligence. The necessary second avenue of examination is on the personal human side since, above all in intelligence, people make the machinery run. McGarvey stresses that the intangibles count so much—the attitudes, moods, politics of particular points of view, the feuds, the horse trades, and the incredible acts of omission.

However, it is precisely when McGarvey pursues the human side, and especially his own experiences, that the reader begins to entertain serious reservations. The descriptive portions of the book on how the system is configured and how it operates are accurate enough. In his opening chapter, for example, he draws a picture of the presumably average Intelligence officer

which simply cannot be termed average. He attempts to generalize far too broadly on these human aspects and this repeatedly weakens the case he tries to make.

The book is made sprightly by his many amusing anecdotes, providing a very personal flavor in his descriptions of the organization and operation of intelligence. However, his points are often so bizarre and so overdrawn that the reader begins to wonder how many of these adventures were really the author's own and how many were apocryphal.

As a general critique of CIA, it is not the equal of Lyman Fitzpatrick's *The Real CIA*, but this work of 1966 did not give as much detail of operations as does McGarvey. It is, nevertheless, superior to Harry Ransome's *The Intelligence Establishment*, another recent book on the subject (1970). The former is by a very senior ex-CIA officer, the latter by an academic. McGarvey's book is a view by a junior and middle grade officer.

LEONARD WAINSTEIN
Institute for Defense Analyses

P-McGarvey, Patrick J.
P-Wainstein, Leonard
SOC. & POL. CIA: The Myth
& the Madness
The Real CIA
The Intelligence
Establishment
CIA 103 Kirkpatrick, Lyman

P-Ransome, Harry Howe

Kirkpatrick

STAT

Approved For Release 2004/11/01 : CIA-RDP88-01350R000200350001-5

Approved For Release 2004/11/01 : CIA-RDP88-01350R000200350001-5